

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell released the following statement regarding the Obama Administration's announcement that the Department of Justice will sue to try to block Arizona's immigration law, Senate Bill 1070.

"I am extremely disappointed that the Obama Administration has decided to file a lawsuit against Arizona to try to overturn our state's new immigration enforcement law, SB 1070. This is the wrong direction to go. I urged President Obama and his administration against doing so because I strongly believe their time, efforts and resources should be focused on securing our border and fixing our broken immigration system. Arizona needs Washington to take action, but a lawsuit is definitely not the kind of action we need.

Illegal immigration didn't occur overnight, and the situation cannot wait simply because folks choose to play politics. Illegal immigration affects our state more than it does any other -- more than half of all illegal crossings over the U.S.-Mexico border happen in Arizona. The federal government has a responsibility to secure the border and fix our broken immigration system, but hasn't done so, and Arizona continues to shoulder the burden.

According to the *Washington Post*, the Justice Department will be arguing "preemption" - that enforcing immigration laws is a federal responsibility. While I'm glad that they agree that that this is a federal responsibility, the federal government has clearly failed to meet this responsibility - and a lawsuit won't do anything to fix that. The only thing this lawsuit will do is demonstrate to Arizonans that Washington still doesn't get it.

I agree with Governor Brewer when she says that the state shouldn't have to pay to do the job that the federal government has failed to do. I agreed with former Governor Napolitano, now Secretary of Homeland Security, when she argued the same. That's why I introduced bipartisan legislation to deploy a minimum of at least 3,000 additional National Guard troops to the border and have persistently urged both Presidents Bush and Obama to put National Guard troops on the border.

While the President acknowledged last week that Arizonans are justifiably fed up with inaction, filing a lawsuit is counterproductive to his statements of appealing to the American People's highest ideals to create a sensible and workable immigration policy. Arizonans are tired of the grandstanding. Political posturing on this issue has to end.

If the new state law spurs Washington to act, then it is a good thing. But make no mistake:

Neither the state law nor a lawsuit to overturn it will solve the problem, secure our border or fix a broken immigration system. As long as an unsecure border and broken immigration system remain, I will keep pushing the President and both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to take constructive action while working on a more comprehensive, permanent fix."

Mitchell previously called on President Obama urging that his administration not sue to block Arizona's immigration law, SB 1070. [Source: [Letter to President](#) , June 21, 2010; [The Arizona Republic](#) , July 2, 2101] Most recently, Mitchell asked the Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, Rep. Ike Skelton, to include within a final National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 a provision to send thousands more National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border. [Source: Letter to Chairman Skelton, June 29, 2010]

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